



MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: October 20, 2016

Agenda Item: Biennial Fee Rule

Division: Parks

Action Needed: Approval

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 20 minutes

Background (Brief description of the issue, decision to be made, history, etc.): In August 2016, the Montana State Parks and Recreation Board gave tentative approval to the division to solicit public comment on a proposed extension to the 2014 Biennial Fee Rule with minimal changes to bring consistency between the current fee rule and the ARM rules passed by the board in April 2016 and to include an adjustment to the camping fee for shared-use (bicycle) campsites.

The Biennial Fee Rule is a two-year rule that establishes recreational use fees for state park lands. The current fee rule was last approved by the State Parks and Recreation Board on October 15, 2014. The current timeline for proposal and passage of the Biennial Fee Rule is such that its implementation occurs after camping reservations have been received for the effective year. This results in lost revenue and inefficiencies in implementation. By shifting the timeline for proposal of a new fee rule to April (currently August) and approval to June (currently October), implementation of the fee rule can take place prior to the opening of the 9-month camping reservation window resulting in increased revenue, greatly improved field processes, and better customer service. This would require an extension of the current Biennial Fee Rule through December 2017.

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public): The proposed Biennial Fee Rule was posted for a 30-day public comment period, closing on Friday, September 30, 2016. One comment was received requesting the Division to continue with the current fee rule, raise fees for non-residents, lower fees for resident seniors, and remove the reservation fee for resident seniors.

Alternatives and Analysis (Brief description of alternative solutions with analysis of the pros and cons of each):

The following alternatives have been identified regarding updated user fees:

- 1) Do not extend the current Biennial Fee Rule.
- 2) Extend the current Biennial Fee Rule through December 2017 with the changes outlined above.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale (Brief description of our recommendation to the Board and the reasons for it): Montana State Parks proposes extension of the current fee rule through December 2017 with the changes outlined above.

Proposed Motion (Draft language the Board could use to adopt the agency recommendation): I move that the Board approve the extension of the 2014 Biennial Fee Rule with the proposed changes through December 2017.